

come sometimes even objects of fear and horror in domestic life—impudent, uncontrolled, reckless of the peace of those who would be glad to cling around them with all the affection of their natures! Men who by the magic of their eloquence can rouse the slumbering piety and energies of their fellow men abroad—can they appear like fallen angels at home; utter many a bitter word, and inflict harsh blows even under the inspiration of internal anger, on pretence, perhaps of needed disciplinary punishment? In such age such things are possible.

New Englander.

THE REFLECTOR.

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 1847.

Foreign Correspondence.

The Labor and Social Progress in the British West Indies.

LETTERS FROM THE ABSENT EDITOR, NO. 15.—DEDICATED TO GEORGE CUMMING, ESQ., OF CAMBRIDGE, MA.

Results of Emancipation.—Important Facts.

If any foreign subject deserves the attention of American citizens, it is the result of emancipation in the British West Indies. The practicability and safety of emancipation in the United States, and the best methods of effecting it, are matters which must sooner or later awaken more intense concern than any and all other political questions. To the islanders in which the experiment has been tried, every friend of freedom and of the country must already be looking, in prospect of what is inevitable in the American States with respect to the institution of slavery. It surely ought not to be forgotten, that the condition and prospects of the emancipated are of far greater moment than the mere interests of landholders and planters; will they now very well, that the selfishness of men will lead them to inquire *heat and chisel*, concerning their own advantage,—to consider, in a word, whether *free labor* is more or less profitable than *slave labor*. This question, of so great practical interest, would not be decided unanimously by the planters of Jamaica. We intimated in a former letter that more is paid for the same amount of cultivation now on the estates than was paid under the slave-system, but we find on inquiry, that this is a point which is warmly contested. A clergyman from one of the best sugar districts in the eastern part of the island, has assured us, on the authority of planters themselves, that free labor is the cheapest. The experiment has been thoroughly tried, and the fact abundantly proved.

From another gentleman who has had ample opportunities of observation, we learn that the profit of free labor depends entirely on the will and management of the planter. Some men were able, by a very rigid discipline and great severity, to exact more from slaves, than they can possibly bring out of the bones and sinews of freemen; indeed such managers are generally troubled, now, to obtain laborers, at any price. Some were so much opposed to emancipation, that they seemed to resolve that the experiment should fail—that the estates should suffer, whether they need to or not. We have been told that the attorney of one estate, which previously had a hundred sugar-hands, was succeeded by a planter who had only two hundred head-gangs. The English proprietor was disheartened, but was assured that this sad reduction was the inevitable result of freedom. At length the attorney proposed to take a *loss* of the estate on very reduced terms, and this the proprietor granted, as his best alternative. Now, all the profits, beyond the small rent, belonged to the attorney; and what was the result? The very next year the estate yielded eight hundred head-gangs—precisely the same amount that was produced before emancipation.

Many instances have been stated to us of a similar change in the productiveness of estates, on their being leased or bought by the managers. One, particularly, we may mention, in which an estate for two or three years ran its proprietor into debt. Alarmed at this minuscule progress of affairs, he wrote to the manager, telling him that he could no longer continue its cultivation at such a rate, and if the estate could not be made to pay for itself, some other disposition must be made of the property. What was his surprise to receive, in reply, from the manager, a proposition himself to take a lease of the estate, and pay him an annual rent of £200. But notwithstanding his surprise, the planter readily accepted the proposition, and the result is that the two hundred pounds paid for rent is but a fraction of the profit which the property has since yielded. The projected farm is said to contain one hundred acres, and it lies between Kingston and Spanish Town. A leading newspaper of this city speaks of it as follows:

The importance and advantages of the Provision Farm will be very great, when it is considered that the property is situated in a part of the island, where Spanish-Town, Port-Royal, Leguanas, the shipping, troops, &c., &c., not far short of 50,000 souls. And if only the half of these consume provisions at a few farthings per day, it would yield a handsome sum, and the capital investment and regular supply of cheap food, to a large and poor population, and act beneficially at the same time the cultivation of the grand staples of the country, by an increase in labor.

We have thus exhibited, with as much comprehensiveness as possible, and on the basis of the best data we can command, the present and prospective condition of several affairs in Jamaica. The reader will perceive that an immediate decision against emancipation, as it has effected the leading interests of the country, would be premature and partial. No doubt remains in our own mind, that, notwithstanding all the obstacles in the way of general prosperity, Jamaica will yet be found to have secured most beneficial results, from the great change which has been wrought in the social fabric. It was better that the old building should be demolished. When the new one, whose foundations are established in righteousness, shall be completed, its glory will far surpass that of the former house, as did Solomon's temple that of the perishable temple honored and preserved by his fathers.

Indeed, as far as we are able to judge at present, the comparative profitableness of free labor will prove to be no less than was represented by Mr. Gurney, (intelligence of whose death, by the way, has just reached us,) in his report of his visit to this island, in 1840. He says that a coffee estate which he visited in Jamaica, was then cultivated at a much cheaper rate than during slavery, when the planters were obliged to support not only the actual workers, but all the young, old, sick and idle. The owner of the estate in question, he continues, described the two different conditions of affairs as follows:

"One hundred and seventy slaves, or apprentices, used to be supported on this estate. Now, our friend Gurney, fifty-four free laborers, who work for him four days a week, take care of their provisions grounds, and another for the man to tend. This is all the labor he requires to keep up his former extent of cultivation. And willingly did he acknowledge the superior advantage which attends the new system. The saving of expense is obvious."

It is observable here that it is the owner of the estate of whom Mr. G. speaks, and not the agent or some foreign proprietor.

But another fact has come to our knowledge which is of no small importance on this subject. It is stated in the report of the Agricultural Society of Barbadoes, another British island, whose estates are more generally occupied and managed, by their owners, that the amount of sugar now exported annually, exceeds considerably the amount exported both in the years of slavery, and the time of the apprenticeship. The statistics for each period are given at length, exhibiting conclusively this gratifying result.

The results of emancipation are, as yet, far from being fully developed. One of the most intelligent and public-spirited men of the island remarked recently in our presence, that the present condition of the country is precisely that of an infant colony. And the same gentleman expressed the utmost confidence that this infant colony is destined to extend and strengthen itself, and become one of the most fruitful and flourishing fields of enterprise within the whole range of the British dominions. Its members are certainly awake, as never before, to a recognition of their duties and responsibilities. The indications of progress are distinctly marked,

and we are most encouraging. We might mention, as proof of this, the fact that the House of Assembly, for instance, has voted a great reduction of the salaries: that of the Governor, from £2,000, (40,000 dollars) to £6,000, (30,000 dollars,) and other officers, executive, judicial, and military, in like proportion. The looks more like national economy. Then Agricultural Societies have been formed, whose object is to improve the methods of cultivation, to secure the introduction and promote the use of modern and more effective implements of husbandry, and in one way and another, to remedy the evils of mismanagement and wastefulness which have heretofore so extensively characterized the country. It is a happy circumstance, also, that many more of the estates, either by lease or purchase, are coming into the possession of residents, whose interest is to avail themselves of improvements, and to make the estates yield the most they are capable of yielding. The last arrivals from England brought information that several gentlemen possessed of estates in the West Indies were on the eve of embarking for the islands, and were coming out in order to satisfy themselves whether or not their estates can be made to yield a profit, a point on which many English proprietors are still in painful doubt. Their visits can hardly fail to be advantageous.

Another circumstance worthy of notice, is the proposed designation by the British government, of American citizens, is the result of emancipation in the British West Indies. The practicability and safety of emancipation in the United States, and the best methods of effecting it, are matters which must sooner or later awaken more intense concern than any and all other political questions. To the islanders in which the experiment has been tried, every friend of freedom and of the country must already be looking, in prospect of what is inevitable in the American States with respect to the institution of slavery. It surely ought not to be forgotten, that the condition and prospects of the emancipated are of far greater moment than the mere interests of landholders and planters; will they now very well, that the selfishness of men will lead them to inquire *heat and chisel*, concerning their own advantage,—to consider, in a word, whether *free labor* is more or less profitable than *slave labor*. This question, of so great practical interest, would not be decided unanimously by the planters of Jamaica. We intimated in a former letter that more is paid for the same amount of cultivation now on the estates than was paid under the slave-system, but we find on inquiry, that this is a point which is warmly contested. A clergyman from one of the best sugar districts in the eastern part of the island, has assured us, on the authority of planters themselves, that free labor is the cheapest. The experiment has been thoroughly tried, and the fact abundantly proved.

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The church is the witness of Christ to the nations. Filled with his spirit, holding him as her Head, she is to go forth to propagate his doctrines, to infuse his spirit, and to impart his life to the world.

To accomplish this her mission, she must herself be instinct with knowledge and holiness. Among all her members, there must be first of all an ability to give to every man that asketh them a *reason* of the hope that is in them. The Bible is to be made the chart of life—the guide-book in every path that leads through this wilderness. The blood of the Immaculate One redeems the soul from legal condemnation; the Holy Spirit renewes, refines, comforts and sanctifies.

The example of Christ is evermore presented as the faultless model of conduct and of character. The believer follows closely in his steps—marks ever, and scrupulously keeps his feet within the path of holiness. He loves God, and he loves man. Heaven is his home, toward which, as the residence of happy spirits, he never ceases to aspire. But while in the world, he is, never fails to remember, placed as a light to shine upon his darkness.

Since the end of a spiritual Christianity is to purify and bless the earth, it can have no sympathy with any form of evil. On the contrary, it opposes itself, whenever true to its mission, to sin in every form. Where its pure influence is felt, there will be no place for the workers of iniquity to hide themselves.

The church of primitive days partook, in an emphatic sense, of the character of a *witnessing church*. For many years she maintained this character. All her agencies and all her influences were in the highest degree spiritual. Her ordinances were uncorrupted.

There was the letter truly, but accompanying it there was ever the element that giveth life. And how was the power of her testimony in those days felt. How did she throw herself upon the ramparts of the enemy, and of death? At length, like the man in the boat, all hope of being saved by his own exertions is given up. Just on the brink of destruction apparently, he springs from the fast floating bark on the river of death, and at once his feet are planted on the Rock of Ages, from which position, though for a little season troubled he may be withal, threatening waves, he will be borne safe to his home in heaven above, and beyond the reach of danger and of death. Would that all on earth stood on that Rock, safe from fatal harm by floods and rapids, and by the thousand influences that are sweeping immortal beings to perdition.

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The Family Circle.

For the Christian Reflector.

Honey in the Wood.

By W. B. TAFTAN.

And when the pale had come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped. Wherefore he put forth the end of the reed, whereat the honey did drop into a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes were enlightened.—1 SAMUEL 14: 26, 27.

Spent with the toil of wasting war,

His drooping hosts compelled to faint—

The longing Child of Israel went

Where nature furnished wild repast.

The aged trenchard had shed

Its pure and incandescent tressure round;

And the rich feast lay only spread;

Free as the winds, along the ground.

For there, upon the tangled grass,

Dropt the sweet bounties of that dive;

Yet, till the day's shade should pass,

No Hebrew might partake and live.

The messiah's son, the empire's heir,

The leader in the conflict's van,

The victor—say, what was he there?

A weary, worn, and famished man!

He took and ate—no more oppressed,

From eyes, enlightened, flashed his joy!

O fainting soul! thus be as that!

With drops of Grace, that never cleave,

Praised him who leads sons of care,

Praised by sin and sore distress—

From famine and fight, to where

There's Honey in the Wilderness.

There's Honey in the Wilderness.